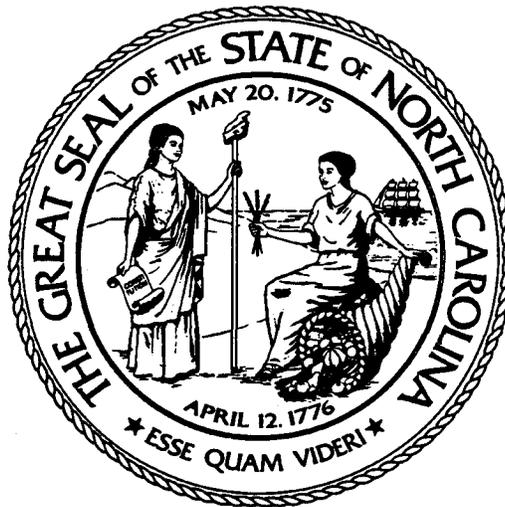


**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON  
NEW LICENSING BOARDS**

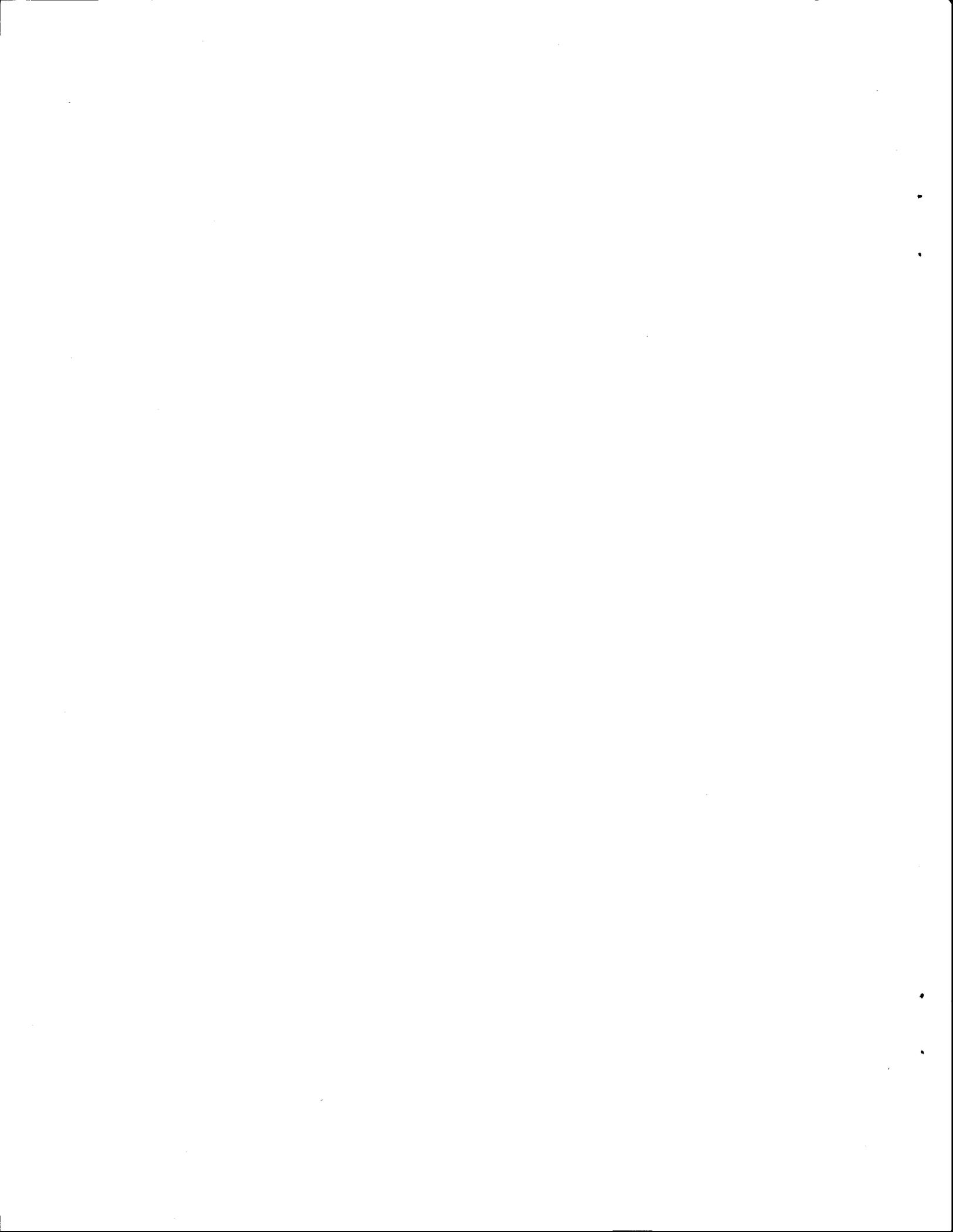
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**BODY WORK THERAPISTS**



**ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**1995**





**North Carolina General Assembly**  
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**June 15, 1995**

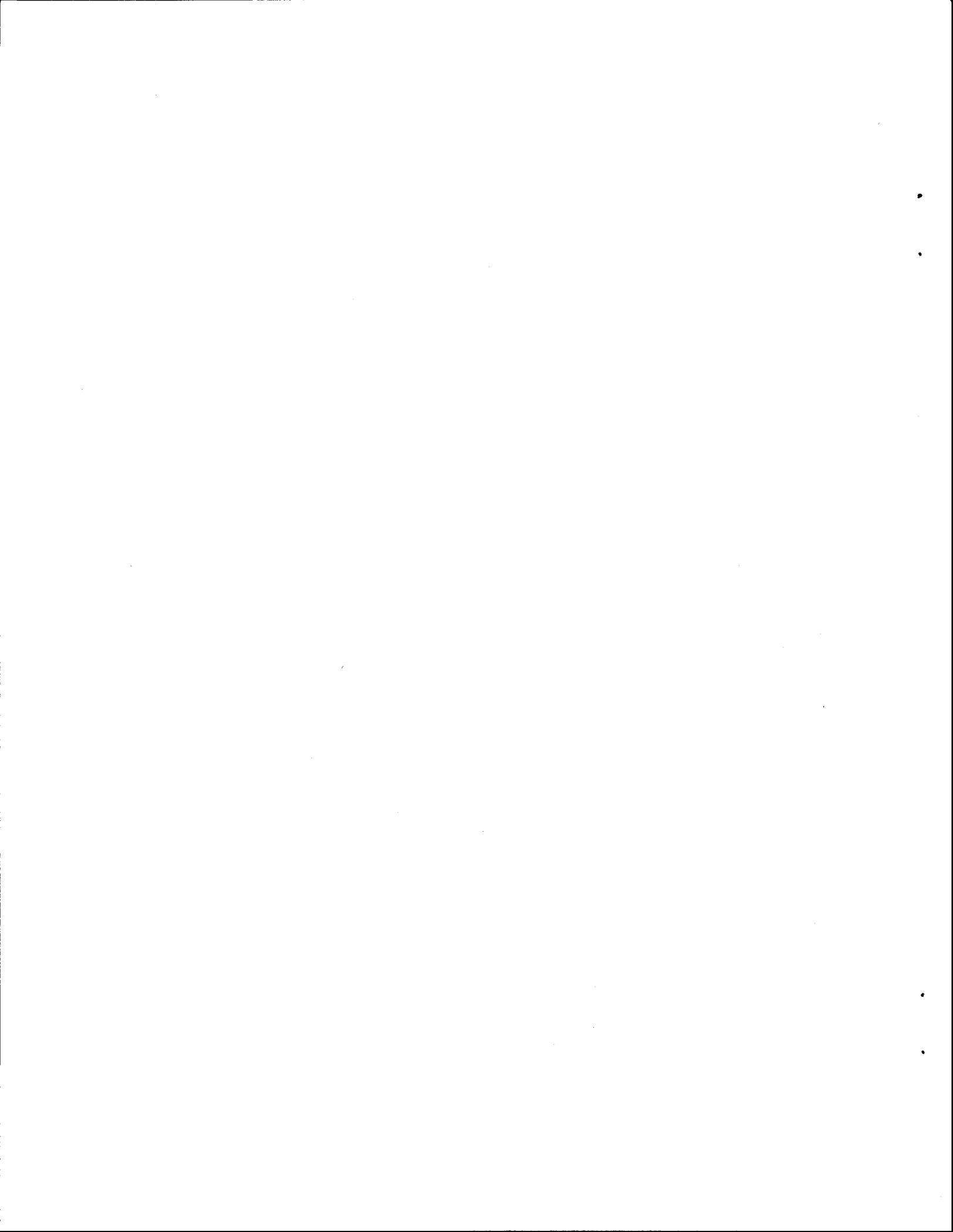
**TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:**

Attached for your consideration is the assessment report on the licensing of bodywork therapies practice (Senate Bill 998). This report serves as both the preliminary and final assessment reports, as required under Article 18A of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes.

*David A. Parnell*  
 Senator David Parnell, Chairman  
 Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards

*Linwood Jones*  
 PREPARED BY:  
 Linwood Jones, Counsel  
 Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards





**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE  
ON NEW LICENSING BOARDS**

**(1995-96)**

**Senator David Parnell, Chairman**

**Senator Frank Ballance**

**Representative Michael Decker**

**Senator Fred Hobbs**

**Representative Linwood Mercer**

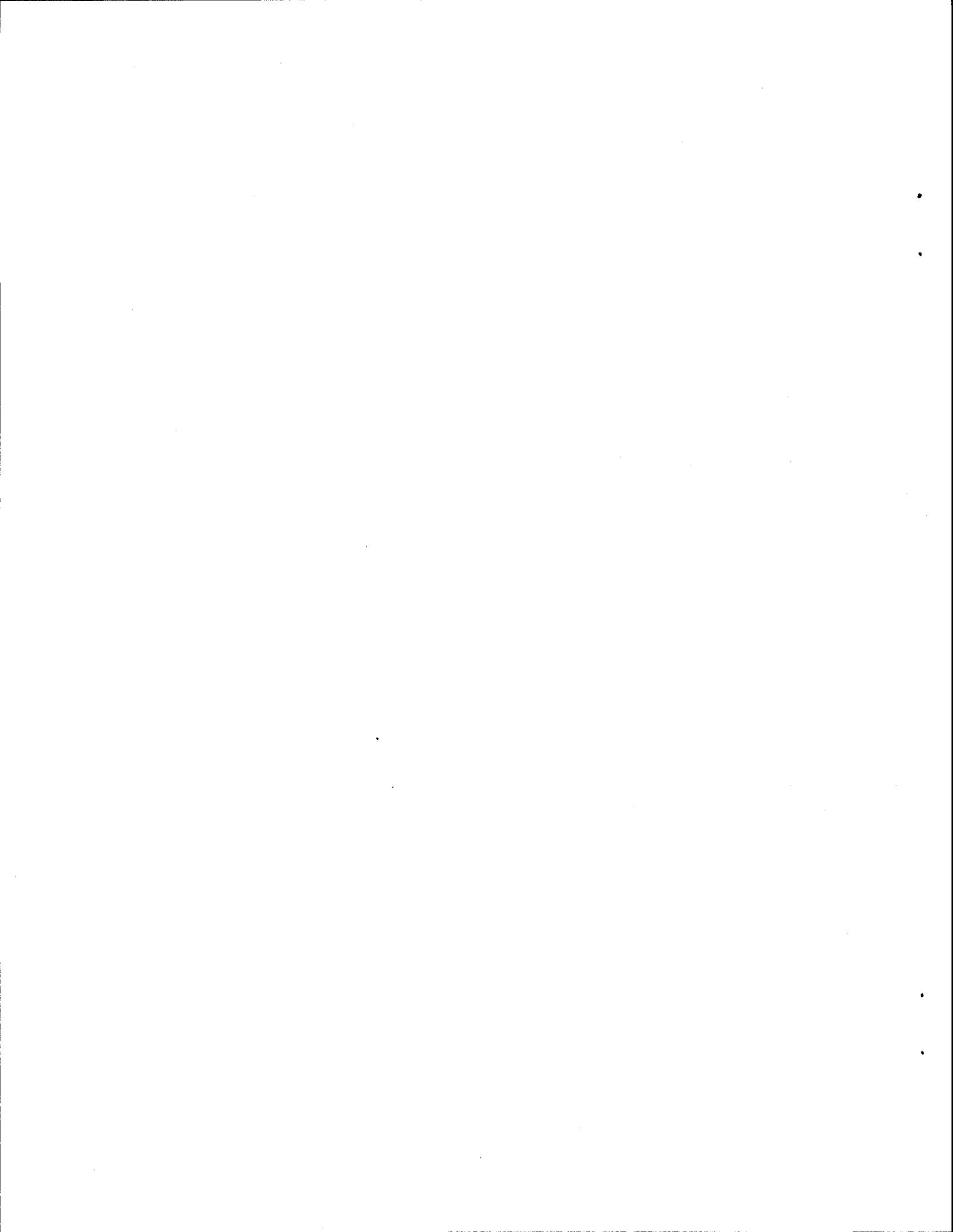
**Senator Paul Smith**

**Representative Frank Mitchell**

**Senator R.C. Soles**

**Representative Wilma Sherrill**

**(Senator Jesse Ledbetter)**



## ASSESSMENT REPORT

Bodywork therapy involves the use of hands or mechanical devices to knead, stretch, or otherwise manipulate the soft tissues of the body for therapeutic, educational, or relaxing purposes, to the extent these activities do not involve the practice of medicine, chiropractic, or certain other professions already licensed by the State.

There are an estimated 800-900 persons in North Carolina who would be licensed under the proposal to license bodywork therapists. Some are already trained and qualified under the American Massage Therapy Association's certification program. The Association's Commission on Massage Training Accreditation/Approval (COMTAA) specifies a curriculum for certification that requires over 500 hours of supervised classroom instruction in theory and clinical techniques in bodywork therapies, human anatomy, physiology, and other topics related to the practice of the profession.

Legitimate, trained, and qualified bodywork therapists have suffered under the stigma attached to the "massage parlors" that serve as fronts for prostitution and other criminal activities. Five North Carolina cities and one county have enacted local ordinances that require professional training in massage therapy in order to practice the profession. According to information submitted to the Committee, at least 19 other states have certification or licensing boards regulating the practice of massage therapy and bodywork.

The proposal to license massage therapists would require at least a high school education or equivalent and the successful completion of 500 hours of Board-approved

massage therapy schooling and the Board examination. If an applicant does not meet the educational requirements, he or she may obtain a provisional license for two years. When the two-year period ends, a provisional licensee is not required to take the course, but must show 500 hours of professional experience in bodywork therapy and successfully complete the Board exam in order to be granted a license. Hospital employees, persons practicing within the scope of other licensed professions (physicians, physical therapists, chiropractors, etc.), and movement educators are among those exempted from the licensure requirement.

The Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards makes the following findings:

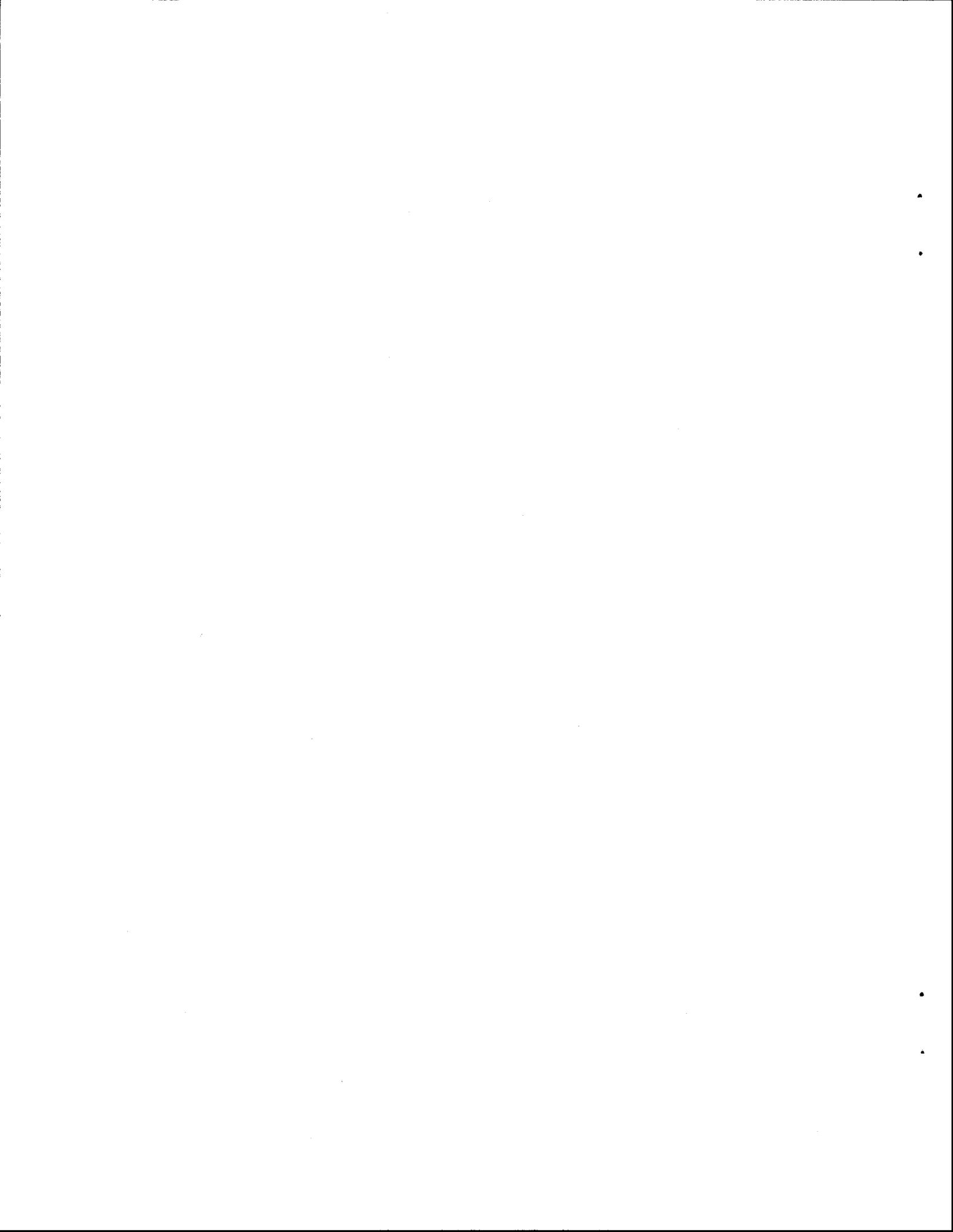
- (1) The unregulated practice of bodywork therapy can substantially harm or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare, and the potential for such harm is recognizable and not remote or dependent upon tenuous argument.
- (2) Bodywork therapy practice possesses qualities that distinguish it from ordinary labor.
- (3) Bodywork therapy practice requires specialized skill and training.
- (4) A substantial majority of the public does not have the knowledge or experience to evaluate the practitioners' competence.
- (5) The public cannot be effectively protected by other means.
- (6) Licensure would not have a substantial adverse economic impact upon consumers.

The Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards recommends the licensing of bodywork therapists.

**Assessment Report**  
**Page 3**

This assessment report is based on the proposal to license bodywork therapists contained in Senate Bill 998. Materials submitted to the Committee on this proposal are attached.

90LLJ-881



**REPORT to the LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE on NEW LICENSING BOARDS**

**1995 NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF BODYWORK THERAPIES**

**SENATE BILL 998**

**Submitted by**

**Legislative Task Force of Massage Therapists  
American Massage Therapy Association – NC Chapter**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Position Paper and Explanation of Bill	1
Report to the Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards	3
Exhibits	10
Exhibit 1:	<i>Guide to Massage Therapy in America</i>
Exhibit 2:	Letters of endorsement and support
Exhibit 3:	News article/advertisement
Exhibit 4:	Code of Ethics of the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork

# LICENSING for BODYWORK THERAPISTS

## Position Paper

Bodywork therapy is a nationally recognized health care profession which includes a broad spectrum of approaches commonly known as therapeutic massage, bodywork, movement therapy and others.

At present, the practice is only voluntarily governed in North Carolina by the American Massage Therapy Association. Due to the absence of a statewide licensing board in North Carolina, those practicing bodywork therapies are governed by local ordinances which attempt to regulate so-called "massage parlors" and "adult entertainment establishments." Placing such stigmatizing labels on these ethical practitioners subjects them to extensive investigation by law enforcement agencies and piecemeal regulation by many local government ordinances.

Licensure for bodywork therapists who meet educational and licensure requirements set out by a Board of Bodywork Therapies is necessary to protect the public from unqualified, untrained or unethical practitioners. The practice of bodywork therapies is very specialized as set out in *The Guide to Massage Therapy in America* (see Exhibit 1). In addition, licensure will bring nationally recognized educational, practical and ethical principles to the practice of bodywork therapies in North Carolina.

The American Massage Therapy Association, as well as medical doctors, dentists, chiropractors, psychologists and other health care professionals support the effort of the North Carolina Legislative Task Force of Bodywork Therapists in obtaining licensure in this state. (see Exhibit 2). In addition, law enforcement agencies and local government officials support the effort to enact a statewide licensure program for bodywork therapists that will legitimize and regulate the profession in order to protect the public.

## Explanation of the Bodywork Therapies Practice Act

The purpose of the Bill is to create mandatory licensure of those engaged in the practice of bodywork therapies to ensure minimum standards of competency among practitioners and to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the general public. Bodywork therapy is a specialized practice that is not regulated in North Carolina. Currently, the only business license that most therapists are able to obtain is an adult entertainment license, thereby placing them in the same category as so-called "massage parlors" and topless bars.

### *Scope of Practice*

"Bodywork Therapies" are defined in the bill as systems of activities applied to the soft tissues of the body for therapeutic, educational or relaxation purposes, which may include a range of manual and adjunctive techniques but do not include the diagnosis of illness or disease, or medical procedures. The bill would require those persons engaged in bodywork

therapy to obtain a license to practice from a board to be created entitled the North Carolina Board of Bodywork Therapies. The Board shall have broad authority to adopt rules regulating bodywork therapists.

#### *Requirements for Licensure*

Upon application and payment of required fees, an applicant may be licensed to practice bodywork therapies if the applicant:

- Has obtained a high school diploma or equivalent
- Is eighteen (18) years of age or older
- Is of good moral character
- Has successfully completed a course of study at a Board-approved school or program, consisting of a minimum of five hundred (500) hours of supervised classroom instruction
- Successfully completes an examination administered or approved by the Board.

No person may represent themselves as a bodywork therapist, may not advertise themselves as such, and may not use any title or description using the terms "bodywork therapist," "massage therapist," etc. if they have not obtained a license.

Licenses shall be renewed biennially. When renewing a license, each bodywork therapist shall submit to the Board evidence of successful completion of at least fifteen (15) hours of study in the field of bodywork therapies during the preceding two (2) years.

#### *Exemptions*

The bill also provides for exemptions from licensure which include the practice of a profession by individuals licensed under other laws of this State who are performing services within their authorized scope of practice (such as physical therapists who use massage), and students enrolled in Board-approved bodywork schools.

#### *Reciprocity and Provisional Licensure*

The bill provides for reciprocity to those licensed under laws of another State upon presenting certain documentation to the Board, and if the State from which the person is coming has also granted reciprocity to this State.

The bill provides for provisional licensure for two years for those practitioners who do not meet the educational requirements at the time the Board is established. The applicant must provide verification of at least 500 hours of professional practice in the field of bodywork therapies, pay the necessary fees and submit other documentation.

The bill also provides for disciplinary action to be taken by the Board for wrongdoing committed by bodywork therapists licensed under the Act.

*REPORT to the LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE  
on NEW LICENSING BOARDS*

I. A. *In what ways has the marketplace failed to regulate adequately the profession or occupation?*

The absence of state licensure for bodywork therapists has resulted in a number of different problems in the marketplace:

**Lack of educational requirements.** At the present time, virtually anyone can engage in the practice of bodywork therapies in North Carolina, whether or not they have received professional training. There are individuals who hold themselves out as "massage or bodywork therapists" who are clearly not qualified to do so.

**No regulatory oversight.** Because there is no agency on local or state levels which oversees the practice of bodywork therapies, there is no mechanism for identifying unqualified practitioners, for investigating claims of potentially harmful or unethical activity, or for disciplining practitioners who have violated established standards of practice.

The marketplace cannot provide these necessary regulatory functions.

**Confusion with criminal activity.** For several decades now, so-called "adult entertainment" establishments have used the terms "massage" and "massage parlor" as a front to promote prostitution and other crimes which typically occur in such places. Because of this unfortunate situation, the terms "massage" and "illicit sexual behavior" have become synonymous to many people. This has placed an undeserved stigma on the legitimate and ethical practice of bodywork therapies, and has prevented many people from exploring these therapeutic approaches as a viable means of restoring health and increasing well-being.

B. *Have there been any complaints about the unregulated profession?*

There have been voluminous complaints to local agencies about the so-called "massage parlors" which present a difficult law enforcement problem. Over the years, municipal boards have enacted prohibitive ordinances in an effort to rid their communities of these undesirable influences. Unfortunately, the "parlor problem" still exists in many areas of North Carolina.

There is anecdotal evidence about problems with unqualified and/or unethical massage or bodywork practitioners, but the lack of a state regulatory agency makes it almost impossible to track such complaints. There have been grievances filed with the American

Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) regarding individual members, but their proceedings are confidential. Also, since AMTA is a private membership organization, not all practitioners are necessarily members.

Since there is currently no licensing board, there has been no formal agency to which the public may complain. Other bodywork therapists have received complaints from consumers and clients. Because of the desire for confidentiality, those names cannot be released. However, those complainants will be asked to contact legislators about the problem. One particular complainant is:

Michele Moss  
2120 Computer Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27608

*II. A. In what ways has the public health, safety or welfare sustained harm or is in imminent danger because of the lack of state regulations?*

There have been reports of individuals seeking legitimate bodywork therapies who have walked into establishments whose signage advertises "massage," only to discover scantily-clad women offering illicit sexual services. This has created emotional trauma and confusion for such individuals. These adult establishments are also havens for illegal drug activity, according to law enforcement officials. This means that "massage parlors" are sheltering a number of criminal activities which are detrimental to our communities.

There have also been reports of individuals who have been traumatized by unqualified and/or unethical bodywork practitioners. Such trauma has been identified as physical, as well as emotional in nature.

*B. Give specific examples*

As described in 1b above, the lack of a state regulatory agency for recording this information makes it difficult to give documentation of these reports. There is, however, the following example provided by a respective therapist and consumer:

Ted Looyen  
The Looyenwork Institute  
Post Office Box 1742  
Sausalito, CA 94966  
415-381-9025

Mr. Looyen came to give a two-day bodywork seminar in North Carolina. During that time he also saw clients for bodywork therapy services. He engaged in inappropriate sexual behavior with a bodywork therapist, and several other women. He also engaged in inappropriate sexual behavior during the seminar. Since there was no state licensing board, the aggrieved individuals had no opportunity to file complaints. This allows therapists to engage in misconduct without being concerned about being reported. Since the profession is "regulated" under the category of adult entertainment, law enforcement often takes the

attitude that the consumer acts at his/her own risk.

Also, please see exhibit 3 for more information.

*III. A. Is there potential for substantial harm or danger by the profession to the public safety or welfare? How can this potential be recognized?*

There exists potential for substantial harm to the public safety and welfare because of the current problem of criminal activities which are promoted under the term "massage." Harm could also result from the current presence of unqualified and/or unethical practitioners in the profession. Qualified bodywork therapists know how to determine whether there are medical conditions present in an individual which may be contraindicated for massage. Unqualified practitioners could treat an individual with a contraindicated medical condition and cause injury, or even death.

There is potential for physical harm by the inappropriate use of modalities some would call bodywork therapies. By having a licensing board, and restricting those who may advertise the practice of bodywork therapies, the public will be ensured that the therapist they see will have the minimum requirements to practice safely and ethically.

*B. Has this potential harm or danger to the public been recognized by other states or the federal government through the licensing or certification process? Please list the other states and give the relevant statutory citations.*

At present, at least 19 states have licensing or certification boards regulating the practice of massage therapy and bodywork. They include:

Arkansas	Connecticut
Delaware (certification)	Florida
Hawaii	Iowa
Louisiana	Maine (registration)
Nebraska	New Hampshire
New Mexico	New York
North Dakota (registration)	Ohio
Oregon	Rhode Island
Texas (registration)	Utah
Washington	

In addition, the following North Carolina municipalities or counties have enacted new massage therapy ordinances or amended existing ordinances which require professional training as a part of licensure requirements:

Burlington	Charlotte	Greensboro
High Point	Winston-Salem	Durham County

IV A. *What will be the economic advantage of licensing to the public?*

Licensure and its resulting professional regulation will attract more well-trained, ethical practitioners to the field of bodywork therapies, and will therefore expand the public's access to these services. The spectrum of bodywork therapies are viewed as a cost-effective means of health care which emphasizes prevention and wellness; its utilization can help the public save money on overall health care costs.

B. *What will be the economic disadvantage of licensing to the public?*

None anticipated. An expanded base of licensed practitioners will encourage healthy competition in the marketplace. This will help maintain costs for therapeutic services at present levels.

C. *What will be the economic advantage of licensing to the practitioner?*

Increased public awareness of bodywork therapies and consistent standards for professional practice will create more job opportunities for practitioners in the future.

There are existing municipal "massage parlor" ordinances which require exorbitant license and investigation fees. State licensure would eliminate those ordinances and uphold one consistent and reasonable fee structure for all practitioners across North Carolina.

Licensing will help the image of the profession, will give credit to the therapists who do meet the minimum requirements, will help maintain higher standards for the entire profession, and will eliminate piecemeal, burdensome restrictions.

D. *What will be the economic disadvantage of licensing to the practitioner?*

For those practitioners not affected by existing municipal ordinances, there would be a modest economic impact from licensure and examination fees.

E. *Please give other potential benefits to the public of licensing that would outweigh the potential harmful effects of licensure.*

As evidenced by activity in other states which license massage/bodywork therapists, there will be an increased number of practitioners interested in and available to provide community service. For example, therapists have provided bodywork therapies to: relief workers and persons displaced by natural disasters such as hurricanes and fires, persons with terminal medical conditions, persons at fundraising events for charities, etc.

V. A. *Please detail the specific specialized skills or training that distinguish the profession from ordinary labor. How is each justified?*

Simple massage techniques can be given by almost anyone who has the intention to help another person feel better. By contrast, the professional practice of bodywork therapies requires a specific body of knowledge and skills in order to be carried out safely and effectively as a health care discipline.

This specialized training includes clinical techniques, theory, anatomy and physiology, ethical principles and adjunctive methods. There are many schools of massage therapy and bodywork systems which offer such training. Nationally, the primary agency which reviews and approves these school programs is the AMTA Commission on Massage Training Accreditation/Approval (COMTAA). COMTAA specifies a minimum curriculum of 500 hours of supervised classroom instruction, in the following areas:

- 300 hours of theory and clinical techniques in bodywork therapies
- 100 hours of human anatomy and physiology, including the medical indications and contraindications for bodywork therapies
- 100 hours of adjunctive subjects, which typically includes:  
Basic First Aid & CPR, communication skills, practice laws and professional ethics, protocol for working with other health care providers, and business practices.

In North Carolina, licensure for schools of massage therapy is presently handled by the Department of Community Colleges, Division of Proprietary Schools Services, which is directed by Dr. Neill McLeod. The Department began requiring licensure of massage therapy schools in 1988, and established a minimum curriculum requirement of 500 hours.

B. *What are other qualities of the profession that distinguish it from ordinary labor?*

There is the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, based in Arlington, VA. The Board's mission is: *to foster high standards of ethical and professional practice in the delivery of services through a recognized credentializing program that assures the competency of practitioners of therapeutic massage and bodywork.*

The largest professional organization in this field is the American Massage Therapy Association, headquartered in Chicago, IL. Nationally, there are more than 20,000 members, with over 450 members in the North Carolina Chapter. AMTA is governed by a National Board of Directors; each state chapter has its own autonomous board. The mission of AMTA is: *to develop and advance the art, science and practice of massage therapy in a caring, professional and ethical manner in order to promote the health and welfare of humanity.*

Goals which AMTA pursues on both state and national levels include:

- *To establish massage therapy as integral to the maintenance of good health and complementary to other health care practices*
- *To ensure the highest standards in providing massage therapy to the public*

- To provide access to quality massage therapy for all persons
- To oversee legislative and regulatory issues in the field of massage therapy
- To fund research into the therapeutic effects of massage therapy through the AMTA Foundation.

VI. A. Will licensing requirements cover all practicing members of the profession?

Yes, if they meet the definition of bodywork therapies practice. Exemptions include those giving bodywork to members of their own family, and those whose present profession (such as physical therapists) includes modalities which are also utilized in bodywork therapies.

Existing bodywork practitioners who do not meet the new educational requirements will be able to receive a provisional license for a period of two years after the establishment of the Board of Bodywork Therapies. After that interim period has expired, those persons will be required to pass the specified licensure examination to receive a license to practice.

B. What is the approximate number of persons who will be regulated and the number of persons who are likely to utilize the services of the profession?

At present, there are approximately 800-900 persons who would be regulated by this Act. Because of the wide range of applicability of bodywork therapies for both preventive and corrective needs, there are few individuals in North Carolina who would not be potential candidates to utilize these professional services.

VII. What kind of knowledge or experience does the public need to have to be able to evaluate the services offered by the profession?

There are objective and subjective means for evaluation. The public must know that there are professional and ethical standards for the practice of bodywork therapies, and should inquire as to whether or not a practitioner has received proper training and credentials. Individuals who receive massage therapy should trust their own internal knowledge in order to subjectively evaluate the effectiveness of a given therapy session.

In addition, if licensure is granted to persons practicing bodywork therapies, those advertising as bodywork therapists will only be those who are licensed. The public will have to discern whether those advertising in other ways to connote bodywork therapy services but not using the terms massage therapy or bodywork are establishments they want to patronize.

VIII. Does the occupational group have an established code of ethics, a voluntary certification program or other measures to ensure a minimum quality of service?

The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork established a

voluntary certification program in 1993. At present, over 13,500 bodywork practitioners have satisfied the educational requirements and passed the National Certification Examination in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, thus earning the professional designation: *Nationally Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*. As well, there is a Code of Ethics established by the National Certification Board (see Exhibit 4).

There is a minimum training curriculum for massage therapy/bodywork schools which has been established by the AMTA/COMTAA; there is a Code of Ethics established by the American Massage Therapy Association.

*IX. Please cite and document the extent which any other licensing board in NC regulates similar or parallel functions to the profession.*

Massage is traditionally included in the scopes of practice for nursing, cosmetology and physical therapy. The amount of specific classroom training in massage techniques that each of these professions receives is minimal -- 25 hours or less. As well, the actual utilization of these techniques in their respective practices is typically regarded as minimal.

The Act will continue to allow those practitioners to include massage in their practices if massage is within their authorized scope of practice.

# EXHIBITS

## CODE of ETHICS

### *National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*

Massage therapists and bodyworkers in the exercise of professional accountability will:

- 1) Accurately inform clients, other health care practitioners, and the public of the scope and limitations of their discipline and have a sincere commitment to provide the highest quality of care to those who seek their professional services.
- 2) Provide treatment only when there is reasonable expectation that it will be advantageous to the client. The therapist will acknowledge the limitations of and contraindications for massage and bodywork and refer clients to appropriate health professionals. Certificants will abide by all laws governing the practice of massage and bodywork and act only within their legal scope of practice.
- 3) Represent their qualifications honestly, including education and professional affiliations, and will provide only those services which they are qualified to perform.
- 4) Consistently maintain and improve professional knowledge and competence, striving for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal and professional strengths and weaknesses and by continued education and training. Certificants will conduct their business and professional activities with honesty and integrity.
- 5) Safeguard the confidentiality of all client information, unless disclosure is required by law, court order, or absolutely necessary for the protection of the public. Client rights will be respected. Certificants will respect the inherent worth of all persons and refuse to unjustly discriminate against clients or other ethical health professionals.
- 6) Respect the client's right to an informed and voluntary consent regarding care and treatment, and obtain the informed consent of the client or the client's advocate before providing treatment. This includes a record of written and verbal consent to treatment.
- 7) Respect the client's right to refuse, modify, or terminate treatment, regardless of prior consent given.
- 8) Provide draping and treatment in a way that ensures the safety, comfort and privacy of the client.
- 9) Exercise the right to refuse to treat any person or part of the body for just and reasonable cause.
- 10) Respect the contribution and expertise of colleagues in massage therapy and bodywork and other disciplines as essential to excellent health care.
- 11) Respect the client's choices between alternative and traditional health care.
- 12) Always be responsible not to engage in sexualizing behavior. The therapist will respect the boundaries and integrity of each person and therefore not engage in any sexual conduct or activities, even if the client attempts to sexualize the relationship.
- 13) Avoid any interest, activities, or influences which might conflict with their obligation to act in the best interest of their clients and the profession.
- 14) Respect the client's boundaries with regard to privacy, disclosure, exposure, emotional expression, beliefs, and reasonable expectations of professional behavior. Therapists will respect the client's autonomy.
- 15) Refuse any gifts or benefits, in excess of acceptable gratuity, which are intended to influence a referral, a decision or a treatment.
- 16) Follow all policies, guidelines, regulations, codes, and requirements promulgated by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork.



*A  
Guide  
to*

**MASSAGE THERAPY**

*in  
America*

*Sponsored by  
the American Massage Therapy Association*

# AMTA Mission and Goals

The mission of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) is to develop and advance the art, science and practice of massage therapy in a caring, professional and ethical manner in order to promote the health and welfare of humanity.

## GOALS

- To establish massage therapy as integral to the maintenance of good health and complimentary to other therapeutic processes

### Objectives:

1. To foster increased acceptance of massage therapy as a therapeutic modality
2. To educate other therapeutic providers and the public about the benefits of massage therapy
3. To develop reciprocal relationships in the health care community
4. To participate in the redefinition of health care

- To ensure the highest standards in providing massage therapy to the public

### Objectives:

1. To establish reasonable standardization of practice, education and certification
2. To ensure the development of legislation favorable to massage therapists
3. To provide education to members regarding the necessity of standards
4. To visibly promote (internally and externally) the standards of the industry

- To provide access to quality massage therapy for all persons

### Objectives:

1. To introduce programs that indicate accessibility, visibility and public service
2. To enable members to practice successfully

- To establish AMTA as an influential member of the health care community and a leader and resource regarding the determination of definition, standards of practice and education; to oversee professional, legislative and regulatory issues in the field of massage therapy.

### Objectives:

1. To pursue a level of recognition by outside agencies
2. To be willing to be judged by objective criteria
3. To establish the capability to monitor and implement standards control
4. To demonstrate that AMTA meets the demands and needs of individual practitioners effectively and competently, and in ways to retain the trust and respect of those practitioners
5. To show competency in individual practices

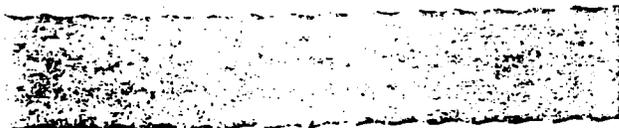
- To continue AMTA's growth, development, strength and visibility to ensure that its focus continues to be on the needs of its members, the public and the profession

### Objectives:

1. To commit to professional managerial expertise
2. To improve our internal standards and controls
3. To re-evaluate organizational structure, i.e., governance and operation
4. To determine the ramifications of membership growth

In pursuit of the above goals, AMTA will be guided by the values of care and competency.

# Contents



**Massage Therapy:**  
HOW AMERICA'S GETTING IN TOUCH **4**

**Therapeutic Benefits:**  
WHAT CAN MASSAGE REALLY DO? **8**

**Stress and the Body** **10**

**Specialized Applications of  
Massage Therapy** **12**

**Questions and Answers**  
WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WANTING  
TO KNOW ABOUT... **16**

**Directory of AMTA  
Affiliated Massage Schools** **19**

**About the AMTA** **22**

**A GUIDE to  
MASSAGE THERAPY  
in AMERICA**

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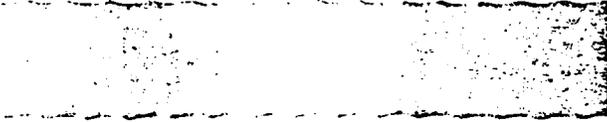
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# Massage Therapy: HOW AMERICA'S GETTING IN TOUCH



Across the country people from all walks of life are discovering the health-enhancing benefits of **Massage Therapy**, one of the most ancient and venerable healing arts. This branch of natural health care spans a wide variety of therapeutic approaches that work to improve a person's health and well-being through the hands-on manipulation of muscles and other soft tissues of the body.

John Naisbitt, author of the best-selling book *MEGATRENDS*, has predicted that, "the more high technology around us, the more the need for human touch." In today's society it appears that our hectic high-tech lifestyles have outpaced our basic need for human contact.

Imagine the stress you experience in a single day with telephones and traffic, work and family demands, financial concerns, and personal conflicts. Intensify this and multiply it by millions - and you can begin to see a primary source of the mindless violence and widespread alcohol and drug abuse in our culture today.

Perhaps human touch can help to break this vicious cycle. Naisbitt's "high tech/high touch" concept is proving true as people from coast to coast seek out the skilled and caring hands of massage therapists for healthy, drug-free relief from the effects of their over-stressed lives.

## MASSAGE IS GOING MAINSTREAM

The media is watching. You have only to pick up magazines and newspapers from the last few years to see a barometer of this change: articles such as "The Message About Massage" in *NEWSWEEK*, "A Guide to Massage" in *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, and numerous others in publications like *USA TODAY*, *ESQUIRE*, and *WORKING WOMAN*. Not to mention a whole sea of words in pages from *ULTRASPORT* to *FORBES MAGAZINE*.

The health and fitness movement has fed this boom, along with America's new emphasis on wellness. Athletes and performing artists praise massage for its relaxing, rejuvenating effects; doctors increasingly recommend it for stress relief and as part of treatment programs for pain and certain medical conditions;

businesses have begun to recognize its potential to boost worker productivity and morale.

## MODERN METHODS GROW FROM ANCIENT TRADITIONS

This long-respected healing art has a history which stretches back thousands of years and spans the globe. The first written records of massage go back 3,000 years to China, although it's certain that the use of touch to heal and soothe extends into the farthest reaches of



human experience. To rub a sore muscle or stroke another in comfort is a natural human instinct; and the "laying on of hands" has been valued among spiritual and healing traditions throughout history. Greek and Roman physicians used massage, as did Egyptians, islanders in the South Pacific, Persians, and Hindus.

In ancient Greece, Hippocrates (considered the father of modern medicine) wrote, "the physician must be experienced in many things, but most assuredly in rubbing."

The therapeutic methods we utilize today come from two main traditions, Eastern and Western. Eastern traditions can be traced back to the systems of folk medicine of China and Ayurvedic medicine of India. Shiatsu, acupressure and reflexology spring from these sources, as do other contemporary methods.

Modern Western massage can be traced back to Peter Henrik Ling, an educator and athlete from nineteenth-century Sweden. His approach, which combined hands-on techniques with active movements,

became known as *Swedish Massage*, one of the most commonly used methods in the Western world.

#### THE STATE OF THE ART

As the twenty-first century approaches, massage continues as an integral part of the health systems of most cultures. For example, in the Soviet Union, West Germany, China and Japan, the therapeutic effects of massage have been recognized for many years. Consequently, massage therapists there have been working along with doctors in the hospital setting as an important member of the health care team.

In West Germany today, doctors will write a prescription for 10 massage treatments as readily as for a bottle of tranquilizers - and that massage is covered by their national health insurance plan!

In the past 40 years, a new wave of pioneers have brought forth a wealth of innovative approaches to the field. People such as Janet Travell, M.D. (Trigger Point Work), Ida Rolf, Ph.D. (Structural Integration) and Randolph Stone, D.C. (Polarity Therapy) have made invaluable contributions to the work we do today.

Many of these new therapies synthesize information from traditional approaches with modern-day scientific knowledge and the latest hands-on techniques, producing therapeutic models which are more precise and effective than ever before.

As this health care profession has evolved, the terms *masseur* and *masseuse* have generally given way to the designation *Massage Therapist*, which denotes a well-trained, ethical practitioner.

By the way, you may also see the term *BODYWORK* used these days. Bodywork and massage are sometimes used interchangeably; however, bodywork refers to a broader range of disciplines which include manipulation-based therapies like Trager and Structural Integration, as well as movement-based approaches such as Hatha Yoga and Feldenkrais work.

#### THE DEMAND INCREASES

The demand for qualified massage therapists in the U.S. has grown steadily over the past decade. Between 1982 and 1991, membership in the American Massage Therapy Association increased ten-fold, to more than 12,000 nationally. And the number of schools with programs accredited or approved by the AMTA Commission on Massage Training Accreditation/Approval climbed from 12 to 56 during the same period.

This resurgence of interest in massage can also be seen in the growth of related products such as high-quality instructional books and videos, relaxation tools and massage tables for both professionals and the general public.

Massage therapists are specialists. In our entire health-care delivery system, they receive the most training in hands-on approaches. In practice, some may focus primarily on a single method, but most tend to

**The more high  
technology around  
us, the more the  
need for human  
touch.**

John Naisbitt,  
author of MEGATRENDS



**Massage is better  
than a good  
tranquilizer and  
serves as a very  
helpful adjunct  
to other therapies.**

**Willibald Nagler, M.D.**  
Head of Rehabilitation  
Medicine, Cornell Medical  
Center

combine a variety of methods in their work, which allows them to tailor each session to the specific needs of the client.

You'll find qualified practitioners offering their services in a wide variety of settings such as:

- private practice clinics and offices
- health clubs, fitness centers and YMCA's
- chiropractors' offices
- nursing homes and hospitals
- spas, salons and resorts
- on site in the workplace
- and even in your own home.

#### **LESS PAIN, MORE GAIN**

Until recently, Massage Therapist Bruria Ginton told *Newsweek*, "Massage has been slow to catch on in this country because people cannot believe that something which feels so good can be good for them." That misbegotten and harmful belief has long been a part of our cultural heritage along with the "no pain, no gain" philosophy of present-day fitness fanatics. The signals and sensations we get from the body are valuable messages to be heeded; the pain is telling you something. So is the pleasure.

We're beginning to listen. You know that "less pain, more gain" is taking hold when *Time Magazine* can report that in places like Murfreesboro, Tennessee, "it seems as if the whole town is beating a path to (Michele Balliet's) table. Not just the doctors, lawyers and bankers, but the factory workers, farmers and handicrafters. "Massage," Balliet says, "has become a necessary part of their lives."

#### **THE NEED FOR TOUCH**

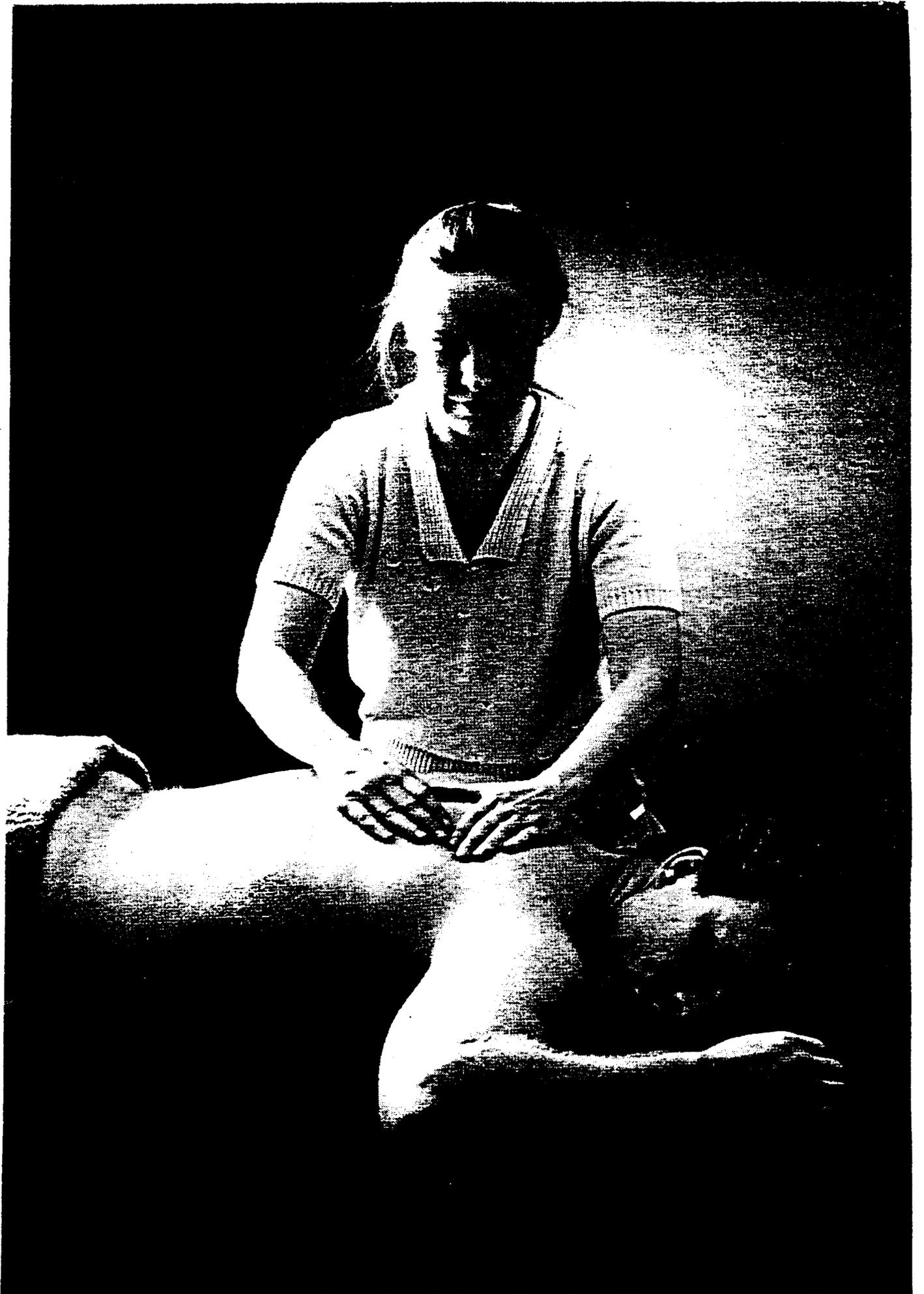
It has become necessary because there's a famine of touch in our country. Therapists say that if massage did nothing but provide an avenue for people to be touched in a safe and caring environment, that alone would justify its existence. In spite of advertising pleas to "reach out and touch someone," we have precious little physical contact with our friends, family members and co-workers.

Yet touch is like food - a basic nutrient for survival - so basic that babies deprived of it die. Because our culture provides so few opportunities for nurturing contact, one of the most significant benefits of massage is the comfort of human caring conveyed by the therapist.

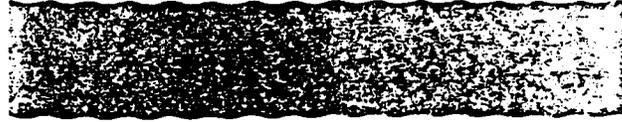
Perhaps massage is the harbinger of a new language of interaction, a language which can teach us non-verbally, at deeper levels, how to live - and not to live; how to combine work, goals, problem-solving and relaxation; how to relate with other human beings in a way other than attack and defense.

Massage is a language which speaks of gentleness and connection, trust and receiving, peace and alertness, efficiency and creativity. All it takes is two hands to communicate it and a body open to listening. What it says is universal.





# *Benefits to Health and Well-being:* WHAT CAN MASSAGE REALLY DO?



Far beyond simply "feeling good," massage has an impressive range of therapeutic effects and benefits, many of which have been documented in research studies conducted in the U.S., Europe and Asia.

With a variety of hands-on methods, a skilled massage therapist not only stretches and loosens muscle and connective tissue, but also greatly improves blood flow to the heart and the movement of lymph fluid throughout the body.

The therapist's hands speed the removal of meta-

bolic waste products resulting from exercise or inactivity, allowing more oxygen and nutrients to reach the cells and tissues. Sensory receptors in skin and muscles "wake up," bringing new awareness to areas that have felt "cut off" by chronic tension patterns.

The release of muscular tension also helps to unblock and balance the overall flow of life energy throughout the body (known in different cultures as *vital force*, *bioenergy*, *c'hi*, *prana*, *ki*, etc.). In addition, massage can stimulate the release of endorphins - the



**Massage can  
break the cycle of  
spasm and pain,  
decreasing both.**

**Robert Leach, M.D.**  
Chairman, Department  
of Orthopedics, Boston  
University School of Medicine

body's natural painkillers - into the brain and nervous system. All this translates into an amazing number of possible tangible results:

#### PHYSICAL LEVEL

- Deep relaxation and stress reduction
- Relief of muscle tension and stiffness
- Reduced muscle spasm and tension
- Greater joint flexibility and range of motion
- Increased ease and efficiency of movement
- Promotes deeper and easier breathing
- Better circulation of both blood and lymph fluids
- Reduced blood pressure
- Relief of tension-related headaches, eye-strain
- Healthier, better nourished skin
- Improved posture
- Faster healing time from pulled muscles and sprained ligaments: reduced spasm, pain and swelling; reduced formation of scar tissue
- Strengthened immune system and disease prevention
- Health maintenance

#### MENTAL LEVEL

- Relaxed state of alertness
- Reduced mental stress; a calmer mind
- Greater ability to monitor stress signals and respond appropriately
- Increased capacity for clearer thinking

#### EMOTIONAL LEVEL

- Satisfying the need for caring and nurturing touch
- Feeling of well-being
- Greater ease of emotional expression
- Enhanced self-image
- Reduced levels of anxiety
- Increased awareness of the mind-body connection
- A sense of being unified and in harmony

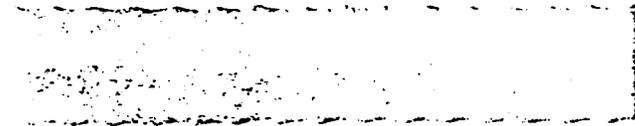
*In the fall of 1987 after a ten-year study, Duke University reported exciting scientific findings about touch and babies. In summarizing the report, SOMATICS magazine said, "maternal caressing, embracing, and moving of an infant's arms and legs promoted protein synthesis and weight gain in the fledgling human.*

*"What was especially striking was their finding that this touching of flesh to flesh caused a specific biochemical event. In as short a period as 12 days, the caressed babies were showing enhanced neurological development and a 50% increase in body weight - a benefit that was still continuing even 8 months later during a follow-up period.*

*"This means that caressing is not merely a passing pleasure devoid of importance; loving touch affects the entire living being for the better."*



# Stress and the Body



We experience all of life through the physical reality of our bodies. Our pleasures and pains, the ups and downs of daily life affect the body profoundly, often in ways we're not aware of. **STRESS** is more than a household word these days - it's something everyone feels to one degree or another. Let's take a look at the mechanics of stress and the role therapeutic massage can play in stress management.



## UNDERSTANDING THE STRESS RESPONSE

Stress is an unconscious and automatic reaction to anything we believe may be threatening to us. In the stress response, the body is primed for *fight or flight* by messages carried by the sympathetic branch of the nervous system. Whether we are confronted by a mugger in the street or find ourselves in a long line at the bank on a short lunch hour, the effects are the same,

impacting all levels - physical, mental and emotional.

We are at full readiness as our body tenses and our breathing gets shallower and more rapid. There is an *increase* in: heart rate, blood pressure and adrenalin production, with a corresponding *decrease* in: blood flow to the extremities, digestive function, and immune system activity.

Ideally, this defensive reaction will subside once the situation has resolved, allowing our body to return to its normal state of affairs. We often help this process with some rest, the right exercise or a little massage.

However, a person who is frequently under stressful influences will tend to remain locked into a pattern of stress response, unable to relax or let go. This type of pattern is damaging to the body; as it escalates, it ultimately leads to discomfort or pain, and is a contributing factor in most disease processes.

The longer one is in pain, the more likely one will try to block it out. It is at this point that alcohol and drugs (both legal and illegal) often enter the picture. Unfortunately, as one uses substances which deaden the nervous system to reduce the perception of the pain, awareness of oneself and others are reduced in the process.

## IN OUR EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE

Like driving a car with one foot on the gas and the other on the brakes, we experience stress whenever we initiate an action and hold it back at the same time. Our ever-obedient muscles try to obey both messages and work against each other.

In the same way, we have our own unique muscular responses to the expression of emotions such as anger, sadness, fear, exhilaration. We use our muscles to block, control and restrain these strong feelings and our reactions to them. Even though we may be unaware of the amount of tension we store within, it puts extra wear and tear on both mind and body over time.

Maintaining these patterns of chronic tension is like leaving the lights on all night - it takes energy; but once it's a habit, we no longer recognize it as such. What we do notice are the aches, pains, fatigue, headaches,

digestive problems, PMS, or a host of other stress-related symptoms. These symptoms are important signals to be heeded, rather than ignored or bypassed. *Accumulated stress and tension always diminish the amount of energy and vitality we have to enjoy life, be creative and productive, and strive for better things.*

### THE RELAXATION RESPONSE

The antidote to stress is known as the "relaxation response," which is triggered by the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system. This action sends messages to the body to *relax, slow down and take a deep breath; saying in effect, "it's time for rest and healing."*

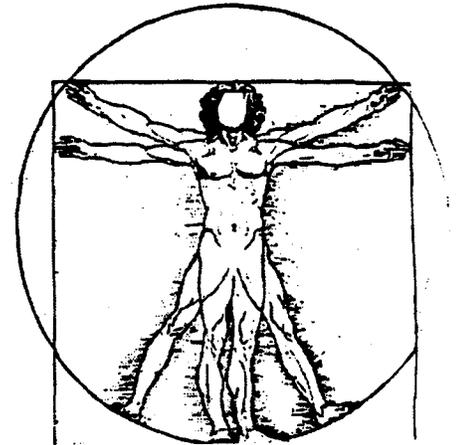
There are a number of ways to promote this response, such as exercise, meditation, listening to calming music, guided visualization, biofeedback, and of course, therapeutic massage.

Massage takes place in a comfortable and safe environment, which is generally away from the source of most stressors. *As massage stimulates the relaxation response, muscle tension is released, circulation is increased and sensory receptors are activated. And areas that have been "cut off" by accumulated stress can*



*begin to feel once again. Massage teaches us to tune in to body signals and soothes us at the same time.*

*All of this results in greater body awareness which can help you to more carefully monitor your own body's responses and needs. Then you can release tension before it becomes chronic and damaging. Living in a more relaxed and balanced body will enable you to better handle the stresses in your life, and nothing can take you back to that state of well-being more quickly than massage.*



*Faces from Unmasking the Face by Paul Ekman & Wallace Friesen  
© 1984 Consulting Psychologists Press / reprinted with permission*

# Specialized Applications of Massage Therapy

## SPORTS MASSAGE: The Competitive Edge

The Olympic Games, Boston Marathon, Goodwill Games and the Ironman Triathlon - these are just a few of the major sporting events of recent years where teams of AMTA massage therapists were on hand\*. Track and field athletes, swimmers, bicyclists, tennis and football players are among the top users of massage as a training tool to help give better odds for winning.

Davis Phinney, U.S. Olympic Medal Cyclist, told *ULTRASPORT* magazine, "At our level of competition, there's such a subtle difference between winning and losing that you need every advantage possible. Massage is one of them."

For years European and Russian sports figures have found massage a necessity (some top Soviet athletes receive 300 sessions a year). John Harris, Director of the Sports Massage Training Institute in San Diego, says,

"It should tell you something that many foreign teams, including the Russians, wouldn't think of traveling without a doctor *and* a massage therapist."

Appreciation of massage is finally a hot item in the States. Indeed, the American sports world has been a leader in bringing acceptance of massage to the rest of our nation. An editorial in *THE PHYSICIAN and SPORTSMEDICINE* sums up speculations on the *why* of this increasing popularity in two words: "It works."

Clearly, many massage benefits are of special interest to the athlete. Different from general full-body massage, sports massage focuses on the muscles relevant to the particular athletic activity, is shorter in time length, and usually more vigorous.

Massage prior to the athletic event loosens, warms and readies the muscles for intensive use, especially when combined with stretching. Besides helping prevent injury, it can improve athletes' performance and endurance. Post-event massage relieves pain, prevents stiffness, and returns the muscles to normal faster, letting the athlete go back to full action sooner.

Sports massage is also used for injury rehabilitation. For example, at the 1984 Summer Olympics, U.S. Marathoner Joan Benoit Samuelson won the gold medal

just 17 days after a leg injury which had threatened to put her out of the competition. Massage was a vital part of the program which enabled her to make such an outstanding comeback.

Jack Meagher, author of the book *SPORTSMAS-SAGE*: says, "The athletic barrier is tightness. Relaxation can be defined as the completely unimpaired motion of a muscle in any direction, and anything you can do easier you can do longer."



Not surprisingly, recreational athletes and fitness buffs are discovering the benefits of sports massage as well. Runners, softball players, aerobic dancers and swimmers alike are including massage as a regular part of their workouts. Besides individuals who go to private practitioners, many health clubs, fitness centers and YMCA's have massage therapists on staff.

\*The AMTA has a national sports massage team and has a certification program in Sports Massage.

## THE HEALTH CARE CONNECTION: From Illness to Wellness

Massage Therapy is utilized in a wide variety of ways both as an adjunct to medical treatment and in the promotion of health and wellness.

### HEALTH MAINTANANCE

**For mothers and mothers-to-be:** Massage is a wonderful tool for relieving discomforts of pregnancy and the post-partum period.

**For infants and children:** Studies show that massage facilitates healthy development, both physically and psychologically.

**For the elderly:** Massage can help maintain normal circulation, flexibility; enhance vitality. As many of our elderly experience greater physical isolation in their later years, touch conveys an essential feeling of caring and belonging.



**For wellness and health promotion:** *Feel better than you think you could!* By keeping mind and body more relaxed and stress-free, hands-on therapies can help prevent illness. They can also raise your health and vitality to a state of *WELLNESS* - perhaps to levels you've not yet imagined!

For most people it's a new idea that health is a spectrum, not just the opposite of sickness. Combined with regular exercise, good nutrition and a positive sense of self, massage can work wonders.

**Massage enhances mental health:** *Be more alive, alert and aware.* Massage helps integrate body and mind, bringing a sense of emotional well-being. This comes from caring touch as well as the release of physical tensions connected with mental or emotional discord. Psychosomatic and stress-induced illnesses can often be aided. And you can learn to know better what your body needs.

According to Dr. Willibald Nagler, head of Rehabilitation Medicine at New York Hospital, "Massage is better than a good tranquilizer, and can serve as a very helpful adjunct to other therapies."

### HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

As an adjunct to medical treatment, massage is addressed to specific areas and recommended (often in combination with other forms of therapy) by doctors and chiropractors for such conditions as:

- backaches
- headaches
- muscle spasm and pain
- hypertension
- to reduce swelling and pain resulting from certain injuries or in the aftermath of surgery, such as mastectomy
- as a palliative treatment for the comfort of those with terminal conditions, such as cancer
- to maintain circulation and muscle tone for bedridden patients

### FOR THE CREATIVE SPIRIT: Touching the Muse

In the words of the ancient philosopher Cicero, "*Only the person who is relaxed can create, and to that mind ideas flow like lightning.*"

Massage relaxes. It frees the body and opens the mind; it sharpens the senses and clears the thinking - releasing the individual's innate creativity and allowing it to expand to new dimensions.

You don't have to be a dancer or singer or star to enjoy these benefits. Whether running a business, overseeing a household or pounding nails, you use creativity; and the more you use, the more results and fulfillment you find.

**In the Performing Arts** massage helps to open the body as the ultimate vehicle of expression, whether in music, dance, or theater. Many leading performers - Bob Hope, David Letterman, Bruce Springsteen, opera singer Luciano Pavarotti, to name a few - receive massage on a regular basis to keep their creative edge and to ease the rigors of performing.

**Massage is  
emerging as  
America's favorite  
antidote to stress.**

**TIME Magazine—  
March 9, 1987**



For Writers and Visual Artists massage relieves the effects of sitting or standing for long periods of time, while it relaxes and helps allow the flow of insights and ideas.

#### **ON THE JOB:**

#### **Massage comes to the workplace**

Sometimes *good* news travels fast. In the realm of American business, word is spreading, and the word is *massage* - particularly massage in a specially designed form dubbed "minimassage" by *Time Magazine*. Workers are finding the minimassage better for the relief of stress and fatigue than coffee breaks or martini lunches.

In the typical on-site massage, which takes about 15 minutes and costs much less than a full-body treatment, the client remains fully clothed, sitting on a stool or specially designed massage chair. The finger-pressure techniques they receive are adapted from the oriental styles of acupressure massage.

More and more companies are putting their money where their stress is. Apple Computer in California, Merrill Lynch headquarters in New York, the art department of the Dallas Herald Tribune - these are a sampling of places where employers have provided the relief of an on-site massage aimed at shoulders, neck, arms and back.

At H. S. Dakin Co., a publishing house based in San Francisco, a company manager says, "You wouldn't believe the difference in this place." He notes that morale and productivity have gone up.

Some businesses hire massage therapists to be on staff, while others contract with massage firms - a burgeoning new enterprise popping up all over with names like Corporate Stressbusters, Pacific Health Systems and Wellbeing.

As health care costs have skyrocketed, corporations are becoming more receptive to health promotion. Documentation shows that for every dollar a company spends on health, it receives a \$5 return.

Good business sense comes down in favor of higher productivity and lower absenteeism. So do the comments of employers, managers, and the clients themselves. Surveys bring out statements like "My energy level has increased." "The massage makes me more alert." "It re-ignites and relaxes us, but not to the point of tiredness. It's a great way to break up the day and a real morale booster."

An owner of several New York City businesses says, "For me, massage is a necessity. I tended to overreact to situations. Now decisions come more quickly and naturally. We all derive satisfaction from human contact. The more of it I get, the stronger I feel, and consequently I can provide strength and leadership to others." (HEALTH, April 1987)

In an overloaded, stressed society, in need of contact, strength and leadership, the healthy relief of a non-invasive massage "treatment" with no unhealthy side effects could be a literal lifesaver - and a stroke of sanity.



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Davis Phinney,  
U.S. Olympic Medal Cyclist

## GLOSSARY of MASSAGE METHODS

### *Something for Every Body*

*The wide variety of therapeutic approaches are sometimes confusing, so here are some short descriptions of the methods you're most likely to encounter.*

*Some massage therapists focus their work on one or two systems, while others are more eclectic - combining them as needed.*

**Swedish Massage** uses a system of long strokes, kneading and friction techniques on the more superficial layers of the muscles, combined with active and passive movements of the joints. Used primarily for a full-body session: promotes general relaxation, improves circulation and range of motion, relieves muscle tension.

**Deep Muscle/Connective Tissue Massage**, as the name implies, releases the chronic patterns of tension in the body through slow strokes and deep finger pressure on contracted areas, either following or going across the grain of muscles, tendons and fascia. Can be used for specific work or full-body.

**Trigger Point Therapy** (a.k.a. Myotherapy or Neuromuscular Therapy) applies concentrated finger pressure to "trigger points" - painful irritated areas in muscles - in order to break the cycle of spasm and pain. Often used to deal with pain.

**Shiatsu and Acupressure** are Oriental-based systems of finger-pressure massage which treat special points along acupuncture "meridians" - the invisible channels of energy flow in the body. Blocked energy along these meridians can cause physical discomforts, so the aim is to release the blocks and re-balance the energy flow. Full-body or specific work.

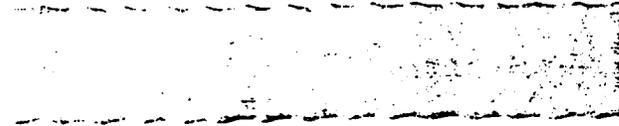
**Reflexology** (zone therapy) uses similar principles, although it's organized around a system of points on the hands and feet that are thought to correspond, or "reflex" to all areas of the body. Specific, but with full-body effects.

**Polarity Therapy** is also an energy-based system, created by the late Randolph Stone, an American chiropractor, naturopath and osteopath. It attempts to harmonize the body's energy flow and structural balance through both gentle and deeper contacts. A subtle and somewhat esoteric approach, but very powerful. Full-body or specific work.

**Hydrotherapy** is traditionally used as an adjunct to massage and is employed by practitioners in some states. It includes modalities such as hot packs and ice applications, along with saunas, steam baths and whirlpools. Water is highly regarded for its therapeutic properties.

# Questions and Answers

## WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WANTING TO KNOW ABOUT...



### Who can benefit from massage?

Young. Old. All in between. Professionals. Pregnant Women. Those who do hard physical labor. Athletes. Performers. Nurses. Counselors. Carpenters. Plumbers. Salesmen. Teachers. Writers. Artists. Administrators. You get the idea - anyone except those with medical contra-indications.

### I'm a reasonably healthy, active person without physical problems. Why would I consider getting therapeutic massage?

1. It feels wonderful!
2. To be even healthier. Wellness means you can feel better than you ever knew was possible.
3. To increase your body awareness and sensitivity
4. To relieve everyday type stress as well as more extreme stress from key times of pressure or crisis.
5. To become calmer, more centered, and thus more creative.
6. To think more clearly and to quiet mental static; to be in relaxed alertness.
7. To nourish your muscles, and your whole self
8. All these help prevent illness and improve life quality.

### When would massage NOT be recommended?

With certain circulatory ailments, especially phlebitis/thrombosis, as well as: high fevers, infectious diseases, cancer (some types), cardiac problems, certain skin conditions, inflamed or infected injuries, areas of hemorrhage or heavy tissue damage, recent fractures or sprains (here circulation needs to be reduced for the first 24-72 hours).

If you have any of these conditions or others that raise questions, consult your physician. An experienced massage therapist will also be able to tell you when massage would not be indicated.

### I've decided to get a massage session. How do I find and choose a good massage therapist?

By all means, check this out thoroughly. It's essential that you trust the person who will be touching you. We recommend an Active member of the American Massage Therapy Association. These practitioners

represent high standards of professionalism, and adhere to a code of ethics. For referrals in your area, contact the AMTA Office (listed on the inside back cover of this Guide).

### In addition:

- Personal referrals are especially good. Ask your friends or associates who they might recommend.



- If you're under the treatment of another health care provider, ask them for a referral.
- When you call therapists, ask what services they offer, and get explanations of any you don't understand. Inquire about their training, certification and fees; you may also ask for references.
- Personality fit is important; so is trust; you should feel confident and comfortable with your massage therapist
- Don't be afraid to discuss any apprehensions or concerns.

### Assuming I've found a qualified massage therapist, what can I expect when I go in the first time?

When you call to make an appointment and when you arrive for your first massage, your massage therapist will ask about your reasons for getting massage.

your current physical condition, medical history, lifestyle and stress level, any areas of pain, etc.

You'll be asked to undress in private and drape yourself with a sheet, towel or gown provided for you (underwear is left on or off, at your discretion); then you'll lie down on a comfortably padded massage table. Only the part of the body being worked will be uncovered, and your modesty is respected.

You can expect a peaceful and comfortable environment for the massage. Your therapist may gently establish a connection in some way such as breathing in rhythm with you for a few moments before beginning the first strokes.

For the period of time agreed upon you'll have the unique experience of having all your muscles kneaded and stroked in a full-body massage, or only in specific areas in case of a session oriented to localized injury, pain or tightness, or sports readiness.

**Do I have any responsibilities during the massage?**

1. To give your therapist accurate health information.
2. To report discomfort of any kind, whether from body, room temperature, volume of music, or other distractions.

**If I relax, won't it take away my edge - my drive and productivity - especially if I get a massage in the middle of the day?**

There are various styles of massage, some more invigorating than others. A good therapist will match the style to your needs. Massage for a business person returning to the office afterward will be different from a session for an overstressed client seeking deep, resting relaxation at the end of a day.

Too much tension always restricts, both mentally and physically. *Relaxed alertness enhances creativity and productiveness.*

**Why do so many people equate massage with the "seamy side" of life?**

America is the only country in the world where the word *massage* has been used as a euphemism and front for illicit sexual activity. Massage Therapy has no connection with such activity. As more and more Americans learn about and experience therapeutic massage, we see that unfortunate and negative association being replaced with a high positive regard.

**Is it good to get massage on a regular basis?**

"Massage has its greatest benefits over time, and most doctors and therapists say the more often you get a massage, the better you feel" - a *NEW YORK TIMES* quote.

The therapeutic effects of massage are cumulative. From one session to the next, you are able to relax more and more as the chronic patterns of stress in the body are released. These changes are readily felt in your day-to-day life, as well.

**What about cost?**

Cost depends on the type of treatment, the experience of the practitioner, where you live, and the length of the massage. Nationally, the range would be from \$20-\$60 for an hour-long session (home visits often cost more due to travel time).

**Can I give a massage to someone else for a gift?**

Absolutely! Most practitioners make gift certificates available. It's a wonderful gift that shows your friends, family members or business associates you care.

**If I get a massage for pain or injury, will insurance cover it?**

If a physician prescribes it, insurance will sometimes cover it. It depends on the company, the policy and state laws. Discuss this with your therapist.

**With all its healthy benefits, why isn't massage used more by doctors or in hospitals?**

It is in other countries. America is the only developed country where massage isn't an official part of the



health care system. In the Soviet Union and West Germany, every major hospital has a Massage Therapy department and restorative therapy is given in spas. Massage is also found in the medical setting in countries such as India, Japan and China.

Yet a study in the *NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE* reported that out of 169 medical schools in the English-speaking world, only 12 have *any* course material relating to the therapeutic value of touch.

Massage is a one-to-one interaction that takes time. In our medical mainstream today, time-consuming treatments are not used, except in extraordinary circumstances. It is our hope that as Americans continue to take a more active interest in improving their health and fitness, they will create such a demand that the medical community will embrace therapeutic massage.



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**What does it take to become a massage therapist?**

Massage is a healing art as well as a science; it requires a balance of technical knowledge, clinical skills, sensitivity and awareness. Everyone has the innate resources to touch another with care and confidence. However, it takes a sincere desire to help others, along with a commitment to the time, energy and focus necessary for the training process in order to become a solid practitioner.

People from a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences are making a career move to massage therapy these days, as they are looking for work which is both personally and professional rewarding.

**How can I find a reputable massage therapy school to pursue professional training?**

Your best bet is a school which has received accreditation or approval from the AMTA Commission on Massage Training Accreditation/Approval (COMTAA). These schools are committed to upholding the highest principles of conduct, integrity and professional ethics in regard to all phases of massage therapy education.

AMTA Affiliated schools offer a course of study consisting of at least 500 hours of classroom instruction, which includes a minimum curriculum of:

- 300 hours of massage theory and technique
- 100 hours of Anatomy & Physiology
- 100 hours of additional required courses to meet the school's specific program objectives, in addition to First Aid and CPR.

Beyond these basic guidelines, each school has its own philosophy, character and curriculum which makes it unique. Use the directory which follows to contact individual schools for more information.

# About the American Massage Therapy Association

The American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) was founded in 1943 and is the oldest and largest national organization representing the massage therapy profession. This Association has grown dramatically in recent years and has evolved with its members as massage has become a multi-faceted health care profession.

On the national level, AMTA serves in a leadership role in many ways. The Association has been instrumental in establishing and maintaining educational

standards through: a rigorous accreditation/approval process for massage schools, continuing education for its members, and advanced certification programs.

A massage therapist qualifies to become an AMTA member in one of three ways: graduating from an AMTA COMTAA accredited/approved program of study, being licensed in a state whose standards meet those of AMTA, or by passing a membership entrance examination. There are 56 schools throughout the U.S. and Canada which are AMTA Affiliated - they are

## AMTA CODE of ETHICS

This Code of Ethics is a summary statement of the standards by which massage therapists agree to conduct their practices and is a declaration of the general principles of acceptable, ethical and professional behavior.

### Massage therapists shall:

- Have a sincere commitment to provide the highest quality care to those who seek their professional service
- Perform only those services for which they are qualified and represent their education, certifications, professional affiliations and other qualifications honestly
- Acknowledge the inherent worth and individuality of each person and, therefore, do not unjustly discriminate against clients or colleagues and work to eliminate prejudices in the profession
- Strive for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal strengths, limitations and effectiveness and by continued education and training
- Actively support the profession through participation in local, state and national organizations which promote high standards of practice in massage therapy
- Work in their communities toward the understanding and acceptance of massage therapy as a valuable health service, abide by all laws governing massage practice and work for the repeal or revision of laws detrimental to the legitimate practice of massage therapy
- Acknowledge the confidential nature of the professional relationship with a client and respect each client's right to privacy
- Respect the integrity of each person and, therefore, do not engage in any sexual conduct or sexual activities involving their clients
- Respect all ethical health care practitioners and work together amicably to promote health and natural healing
- Conduct their business and professional activities with honesty and integrity and project a professional image in all aspects of their practices
- Accept the responsibility to self, clients and associates to maintain physical, mental and emotional well-being



leaders in career training and professional development.

AMTA regularly provides teams of sports massage therapists for premier athletic events (see page 16). And it has recently formed the AMTA Foundation which is dedicated to funding and assisting research, education and voluntary outreach programs involving massage therapy.

The Association publishes an excellent quarterly magazine, the *MASSAGE THERAPY JOURNAL*. Written for the general reader as well as the professional, it covers a wide range of topics relating to health and hands-on therapies.

Two of the major obstacles facing the massage therapy profession are: lack of public awareness about massage therapy, and oppressive laws which affect the practice of massage. AMTA addresses these vital issues and supports the work of its members through both National Public Relations and Law and Legislation Programs.

The Association also has a national office in Chicago, Illinois. This headquarters serves as a central networking resource which can provide you with free information about membership, training in massage therapy and referrals to qualified practitioners. This office can also answer any questions you may have pertaining to massage - or will help you find appropriate resources.

AMTA is governed by a National Board of Directors, which guides the work outlined above. The organization exists to serve the needs of its members, and especially, the health care consumer.

In addition, there are AMTA State Chapters in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands. There are also members in Canada and other foreign countries. Each individual chapter has its own Board of Directors, which establishes goals and designates projects which serve its members and the public on a local level.

*"AMTA is committed to upholding the highest standards of educational expertise and professionalism. We invite your inquiry."*

Elliot Greene, AMTA National President

## Contact AMTA

**At:**

**820 Davis Street, Suite 100  
Evanston, Illinois 60201-4444**

**Phone • 708-864-0123**

**Fax • 708-864-1178**

**For:**

- additional information
- ordering more copies of this booklet
- subscriptions to the *Massage Therapy Journal*
- national referrals to qualified massage therapists

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# North Carolina Physical Therapy Association, Inc.

a chapter of The American Physical Therapy Association

1002 Vandora Springs Road • Garner, NC 27529 • (919) 772-6850



May 30, 1995

Senator David R. Parnell, Chairman  
Committee on New Licensing Boards  
North Carolina Senate  
State Legislative Building  
Raleigh, NC 27601

Re: SB 998 - Bodywork Therapies Practice Licensing Act - - -  
Opposition by the North Carolina Physical Therapy Association

Dear Senator Parnell:

On behalf of the North Carolina Physical Therapy Association, by this letter I would like to express strong opposition to SB 998 - Bodywork Therapies Practice Licensing Act. We hope that you will recognize that SB 998 is not needed to allow reasonable levels of bodywork and massage practice, and that if passed it would contribute to rising health care costs and allow persons who do not have adequate training to be licensed by the State as initial entry health care practitioners. (This bill is almost identical to legislation from a previous session, HB 910-Massage Therapy Practice, which was defeated when it failed to emerge from the Senate Finance Committee in 1994.)

S.B. 998's proponents have urged passage of this and predecessor legislation in order to establish a new "health care discipline", and to assist in providing treatment to persons with "injury" and "illness".<sup>1</sup> Supporters have said that patients should go to bodyworkers or massage therapists for treatment of some medical problems, rather than to physical therapists, because they are "faster", "more expert", etc.<sup>1</sup> In our view, while bodywork and massage practitioners as defined in SB 998 may be very capable of providing massage for relaxation or recreational purposes (such as in YMCA's, health clubs, barber shops, etc.), they have only very limited education and training, and they are not by any stretch of logic or reason qualified to be primary health care providers. Only medical doctors or other providers with genuine medical training should be licensed to be points-of-entry into our health care system. Massage therapists and other bodyworkers are not required to be educated to recognize complex medical problems and

<sup>1</sup>Report to the Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards, 1993 N.C. General Assembly, Legislative Task Force of Massage Therapists, American Massage Therapy Association - N.C. Chapter.

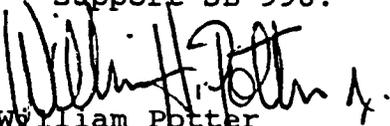
Senator David R. Parnell, Chairman  
May 30, 1995  
Page Two

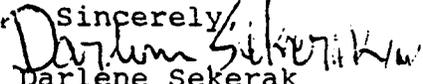
the bill does not require physician referral. Furthermore, assertions by proponents that "massage therapy can be paid by insurance"<sup>2</sup> show that there will unquestionably be additional third party health care costs from this bill.

In North Carolina, physical therapists receive their education and training at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke University, and East Carolina University, hospital based programs -- in major medical centers. Physical therapists receive thousands of hours of medical education, including cadaver studies and intensive clinical work. In contrast, massage therapy schools in North Carolina are licensed as proprietary "trade schools" by the Department of Community Colleges (they have no connection with Community Colleges' allied health education programs), and these schools do not offer any hospital experience or genuine medical-clinical training. SB 998 would set minimum qualifications for bodywork and massage therapy licensing as: 18-years old, high school graduation or equivalent, and 500 hours of training (three to six months in a trade school). Materials supplied by proponents of SB 998 indicate that the 500 hours of training includes 300 hours on massage methods, 100 hours on anatomy and physiology, and 100 hours on First Aid/CPR and additional courses. Clearly, 100 hours of anatomy and physiology (that could be taken in a single 5 week course) is not sufficient to allow the recipient to diagnose or recognize medical conditions that should not be treated by massage -- conditions such as infectious disease, cancer, cardiac problems, or fractured bones. Proponents of SB 998 candidly admit that massage therapists should not treat these conditions.<sup>2</sup>

Bodywork and massage therapists may be very qualified to provide simple massage, but they should not be licensed as independent health care disciplines by the State of North Carolina. Bodywork and massage therapists should not be approved and encouraged as health care providers without medical practitioner referral and supervision. In this time of government struggles with rising health care costs, a new cost element should not be endorsed.

Thank you for your consideration. We hope you will not support SB 998!

  
William Potter  
Attorney and Lobbyist  
Telephone: 919-828-0684

Sincerely,  
  
Darlene Sekerak  
Association President  
Telephone: 919-966-4708

  
Mary Connor  
Legislation Coordinator  
Telephone: 704-487-3875

<sup>2</sup>Report to the Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards, 1993 N.C. General Assembly, Legislative Task Force of Massage Therapists, American Massage Therapy Association - N.C. Chapter.

